

The Punta Gorda Herald

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DIVIDE THE COUNTY NOW

Present Stringency No Objection to County Division.

EDITOR HERALD:—Meeting with an old friend a few days ago, the question was asked: Under the circumstances, considering the hard times, the dry season of last year with the short crop of oranges which sold for very low prices, and with the prospect for the present year not being any too good, how can we afford to again take up county division? And to this vital and proper proposition I was expected to reply.

I admit that the conditions are none too good, and, instead of assuming burdens, it would seem that measures for relief should be sought; and, if it was possible to be relieved of the burdensome taxes which we are compelled to pay, there would be some reason why we might forego division. Ah, there is the rub. We are now paying the limit of the law for all county funds except General Revenue, and that will have to be raised next July, as that fund, by reason of "well paying out" more than coming in, is short; so that by living in a great county, we have the prospect of increased taxes, which is as sure to come as that the sun rises in the east and sets in the west.

For some months, I have made a study of the County Treasurer's and the Auditor's report, and I state it boldly that the present Board of County Commissioners will have to do some good work to keep the county out of debt; and as stated, they will have to increase the general tax. I believe it is entirely practical to organize and build up a new county with less taxes and same rate of valuation as now, though, to be sure, the increased benefit derived by having a county seat near at hand would of itself be justification for any increase that there might be for a few years; at least, there would be something to show for what was paid.

For the purpose of showing that I am not joking, will take, for instance, the road tax of 7 mills—7 cents on a value of \$10 and \$7 on a value of \$1,000. I take it that, if DeSoto County should remain intact, we will be more than fortunate if we get off by paying 7 mills road taxes. Now, speaking for South DeSoto, it would be practical to keep up the Roads and the Bridges within the territory with a 3-mill tax, indeed, by utilizing the County Prisoners, they can be made to almost entirely keep up the roads, and, with a small tax of say 1 mill to pay for material, I believe the roads can be maintained far better than now. At any rate, we can save 4 mills, which will go a long way towards paying for a court house and jail.

Then in School taxes we pay 7 mills, and, for present purposes, it is enough to state that we get back about half of the taxes paid, so that of School taxes we would save at least 3 mills, which will help pay for roads.

In Court costs we pay 2 mills; and by reason of short mileage, it is safe to figure a saving. As it may not be generally known, I will here state that the Courts

have it within their power to largely make themselves self-supporting.

Now, there remains the general tax, which is now 2 mills; but, as I have stated, will have to be increased. Suppose we take the limit of the law, 5 mills, for a few years. We still have a few mills to spare over and above what we now are compelled to pay. So that I conclude that, in spite of hard times, with no immediate prospect of any great prosperity coming to us, we can well afford to take up the issue of County Division.

Other people seem to figure from interested motives, and why should we of the Southern part be any better than our fellow men? As I have shown, we can save some money by the operation; that of itself should be justification.

Respectfully,

N. C. LARSEN.

YOU CAN'T VOTE, UNLESS

Your Poll Taxes Are Paid.—Those Who Must Pay.

No one who is liable to pay a poll tax will be permitted to vote in the coming primaries, unless the tax has been paid. Some voters will have to pay for two years, some for one year, and others will not have to pay any at all. On this subject, the tax collector of Duval county furnishes the Times-Union with all necessary information, which is applicable to every county in the State. In place of Duval in his synopsis of the laws, put the name of your own county (DeSoto, for instance), and you will readily understand whether you owe a poll tax or not. The following is his synopsis as printed in the Times-Union:

Such electors who became 55 years of age prior to January 1, 1906, are not liable to poll taxes.

Such electors as became 55 years of age after January 1, 1906, and prior to January 1, 1907, owe \$1 poll tax, for the year 1906.

Such electors as became 55 years of age after January 1, 1907, owe poll taxes for 1906 and 1907, a total of \$2.

Such electors qualifying for the coming election on age, who reached their majority (21 years) after January 1, 1907, are non-liables, and should secure a non-liable's certificate from Supervisor DeSoto when they register for the primary.

Such electors as became 21 years old after January 1, 1906, owe only \$1, for the year 1907.

If there are any who came of age prior to January 1, 1906, but who are just registering, they owe \$2, \$1 for each of the years 1906 and 1907.

The other class of electors getting in line comprise those who have just acquired a residence in the county and the state, namely, who have resided in the county six months and in the State one year.

These may be divided into two classes. In the first are those who came to Duval county from other counties of Florida, and having met the state requirement of one year's residence have also met now the requirement of six months' residence in the county.

In the other class are those who moved to Duval county from some

OUR ROAD MATERIAL

Inspected and Approved by Town and County Officials.

Col. Elam B. Carlton, mayor of Wauchula, and Hon. D. J. Farrabee, of Ona, county commissioner, came down here last Thursday to inspect the road work being done by the county convicts under direction of Commissioner Concannon, but more particularly to investigate the merits of the material being used for hard surfacing the roads of this district.

Commissioner Concannon took them out on the road and, after making a thorough examination, they expressed the opinion that we have the best road material in the State. This was the opinion of Commissioner D. S. Williams, who was here the week before and inspected the work and material.

This material is a kind of natural concrete which does not require any treatment at all, save to be spread upon the road and left to be packed by wagons and rains, which quickly convert it into solid rock. The supply is inexhaustible and easily accessible, being only two or three feet beneath the surface of thousands of acres of land just out of town on the south. The depth of the deposit is unknown, as, after digging down twelve or fifteen feet, water enters and stops ordinary work. If necessary, pumps or steam shovels could be used to facilitate deeper mining.

Mayor Carlton was so favorably impressed with the excellence of this material that he intends trying to make arrangements to have it used for paving the streets of Wauchula; and Commissioners Farrabee, Williams and Concannon, being convinced that it is the best in the State, favor the idea of the county buying a portion of the land to secure the material for all the roads of the county.

It is said that the South was drained of not less than \$60,000,000 last year in life insurance premiums, of which less than \$2,000,000 went to southern companies. This is one leak that counts the South just \$58,000,000 poorer than it would have been had our people learned the lesson of patronizing home industries. But "you pay your money and take your choice."—Taylor County Herald.

other state, and had both the state and county residence to acquire.

Those who moved to Duval county from another Florida county, but who have lived in this county for six months, are liable for poll taxes for the years 1906 and 1907, \$2 in all, unless they present the poll-tax receipt of another county for those two years.

Those who have removed to this county from another state since January 1, 1907, are non-liable, and should secure a non-liable's certificate, with their registration certificate.

Those who moved to this county from another prior to January 1, 1907, but after January 1, 1906, are liable for only the year 1907, and owe but \$1.

Those who moved to this county from another state prior to January 1, 1906, are liable for the years 1906 and 1907, and owe \$2.

Reports from Key West state that the sponge industry has been revived there, and the business in the city is picking up rapidly. Many of the vessels which have been idle for months are again at work and some of them come into port each week with catches of sponge which find a ready sale at good prices.

St. Augustine Record:—Vegetable shipments from the lower East Coast are increasing daily in volume and now many carloads pass through each day en route to northern markets. From twelve to fifteen express cars loaded with tomatoes, beans, etc., pass here daily and by freight from 25 to 30 cars laden with vegetables rush by daily. Within a few weeks potatoes will commence to move from Hastings section and the volume of vegetable shipments will be greatly increased.

CHEAP BEEF PROBLEM.

Florida Cattle-Raisers Can Easily Solve It.

Orlando Reporter-Star:—Orlando citizens wishing to purchase meat this week will be thunderstruck to learn that the price on Western meat has doubled. There are many reasons for this, and the newspapers are full of statements from the large firms controlling this industry giving statements of the case.

We care not why meat has taken such a jump. We only know that at the prevailing prices many poor people in the cities will be denied the privilege of eating meat. And now is the time for the Florida farmers to come forward with their own fat cattle and put the Chicago and other Western firms out of the Florida business forever.

Florida cattle fattened on velvet beans at a small cost are the best beef cattle in the United States, and yet we cannot get this meat, because few farmers care to incur the extra labor of feeding the cattle in a stable.

Velvet beans can be grown on any land and, when plowed under, make a fine fertilizer and in many ways it is a most prolific plant and yields large returns to the farmer. Besides the velvet bean, there are a number of good forage plants grown here, and with very little work and expense, Florida could raise cattle within her own borders that would forever break up the "hold-up game" practiced by the "beef trust."

DeLand Record:—Gen. Albert W. Gilchrist, candidate for governor, spent yesterday at DeLand, in the interest of his candidacy. In an interview with the general, he informed The Record that as to the state prohibition matter, if he is elected he shall certainly sign such a bill if passed by the legislature, and will oppose no measure which aims, in the end, toward such a law; that at present a constitutional amendment must be passed upon by the people of the state before state prohibition can obtain. He said that he was sanguine of his election, and if he succeeds he will be the governor of all the people, and no one would regret his election as the chief executive of Florida.

NEGLECTED FRUITS

That Would Pay the Florida Grower.

The following is Bulletin No. 87 of April 4th, prepared by Prof. John Belling, and issued by the Florida Agricultural Experiment Station:

Many tropical and sub-tropical fruit-trees which may thrive in some parts of Florida seem not to be worth planting on account of the inferior character of their fruit. On the other hand, there are certain excellent fruits which might with advantage be more abundantly grown in Florida than they are.

The best kinds of grafted Japanese persimmons are worthy of more extended cultivation for private or local supply throughout northern and central Florida, quite apart from the question whether dwellers in Northern cities are yet educated in the use of this fruit to make it profitable to plant groves here for shipping purposes. Now that it has been shown (in the Annual Report for 1907 of the Fla. Agr. Exp. Sta., which will be sent free on request) that the astringent fruits can be perfectly ripened in alcohol vapor in closed barrels or other containers, very little ingenuity is needed to put them on the market in a completely ripe condition. Prof. P. H. Rolfs considers that, "Every property owner in Florida who has more land than a city lot should have one or more trees of the Japanese persimmon, so that his family can be supplied with fresh fruit at a time of the year when otherwise they would have to purchase frequently inferior fruit. The Japanese persimmon can be grown in every section of Florida, and the good trees would supply one family. Among the varieties that may be recommended for the whole State are Hyakume, Okame and Yemon."

THE FIG.

Good varieties of the fig might well be more commonly planted in central and northern Florida. Where the fig tree can be grown without much injury from root-knot, the heavy crops it yields have a large market open for them when preserved in syrup or when crystallized. Either raw or preserved they form a healthful addition to the dietary of children, and even one well-cared-for fig-tree near the house, if it is only given sufficient sunlight and water, with ashes, etc., from the kitchen will provide large quantities of good fruit. The fig prefers a rather heavy soil, but the drainage must be good enough to prevent stagnant water from accumulating. Cuttings grow very easily, and should be taken from those fig-trees in the neighborhood which yield the best crops. This tree well repays fertilizing, but it will not do to give it too much ammonia, relatively to the potash and phosphate, especially if the soil is already rich.

THE GUAVA.

The guava groves of South Florida might with advantage be considerably extended, through the best varieties for jelly-making or canning, by means of (Continued on page 6.)